Morton County

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

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For Immediate Release
November 16, 2016
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**Morton County Chairman Cody Schulz Responds to US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) Delay of Pipeline Decision**

Mandan, ND - Morton County Commission Chairman Cody Schulz responded today to the US Army Corp of Engineers announcement to further delay a decision on granting or denying the easement required for the Dakota Access Pipeline to complete boring under Lake Oahe. "The scope of the federal government's inaction is breathtaking. They have not only furthered the uncertainty of the situation and prolonged the outcome, but have at the same time refused law enforcement resources requested by the County and State to deal with a situation that is to a very large degree a federal issue," said Schulz. "I find it more than a little hypocritical that the USACE and DOJ can stand up in a federal court and argue that all laws, regulations, rules, and policies were followed in their permitting of the project, and after a federal court agrees with them they backtrack and delay the final easement for more study."

County and State law enforcement officials continue to operate in an environment that requires balancing the tasks of protecting citizens' rights to protest peacefully and stopping the illegal and sometimes violent actions of a faction of the protesters. "I have stated before that further delay puts peoples' safety, health and life on the line. While the violent faction within the protest group is a minority, it is a real threat to law enforcement. The hostile actions law enforcement have endured include being shot at, having Molotov cocktails, rocks, sticks, bottles, cans, and feces thrown at them, having buffalo stampeded at them, being spit on, and being verbally assaulted." Schulz also expressed a concern for those in the protest camps staying safe in winter conditions. "North Dakota winters are hard, and further delay by the federal government also prolongs people living in tents and teepees in harsh conditions. Our goal is to keep everyone safe, including protesters, and the federal government just continues to make that more difficult."